

BODY-21, Painting a 944

Introduction

This is not necessarily intended for someone to paint their own car. It's more intended to inform 944 owners as to what exactly it takes to PROPERLY paint a 944. I've seen many unhappy 944 owners due to botched paint jobs performed by otherwise very competent body shops. The problem that occurs is that shops that don't have a lot of experience with 944s simply don't understand everything involved in painting a 944 and therefore grossly underestimate the cost of the job.

Hopefully this article will provide you with enough information to ensure that the shop you're using understands how to paint a 944 or that you can provide instructions to your body shop as to how your car should be painted.

Preparation

Just like painting any other vehicle, ninety percent of ensuring a quality paint job on a 944 is in the preparation. However, to properly paint a 944, the preparation can get pretty involved. There are a lot of body parts on a 944 which must be removed and painted while off of the car for professional results. Therefore, the painting process can become pretty labor intensive. Expect a quality paint job to run anywhere from \$2500 - 4000 depending on location. Every shop approaches painting a 944 differently. What I'm going to describe is how my car was painted. Quite honestly, I don't know how the shop could have been more thorough.

Let's start with the front of the vehicle. The headlight covers should be removed as well as the nose panel. That is of course assuming the nose panel is removable. I realize that on 924s and early 944s the panel isn't removable and must be painted on the car. Also remove all the ground effects in the front of the car and paint them off of the car. On normally aspirated 944s, that means removing the front spoiler and front bumper. Remove the lights and bumper pads from the front bumper. On cars with the turbo front end, remove the fog lights and remove the front bumper cover. On all cars, remove the side mark lights.

Moving on back on the car, remove the mirrors and door handles. Also remove the trim pieces on the roof. Remove the sunroof and all of the seals in the sunroof area. Paint the sunroof off of the car.

At the rear of the vehicle, remove the hatch from the car. Remove the tail lights, license plate assembly, bumper cover, ground effects, and side markers.

After all of the necessary parts have been removed the car and all removed parts should be sanded, all dents and dings repaired, and primed. To ensure a perfect painting surface, the car should be "blocked" after priming. You're body shop will know what that means. Basically, it's a process where a second coat of primer is applied of a different color. The body is then hand sanded. As the top color is sanded off, the base color will show through unevenly if the surface isn't level. These areas can then be leveled before painting.

This concludes the preparation. I know it may seem a bit overwhelming. However, the outcome of the job is all in the preparation. Once the painted surfaces are properly prepared, the painting is relatively simple.

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